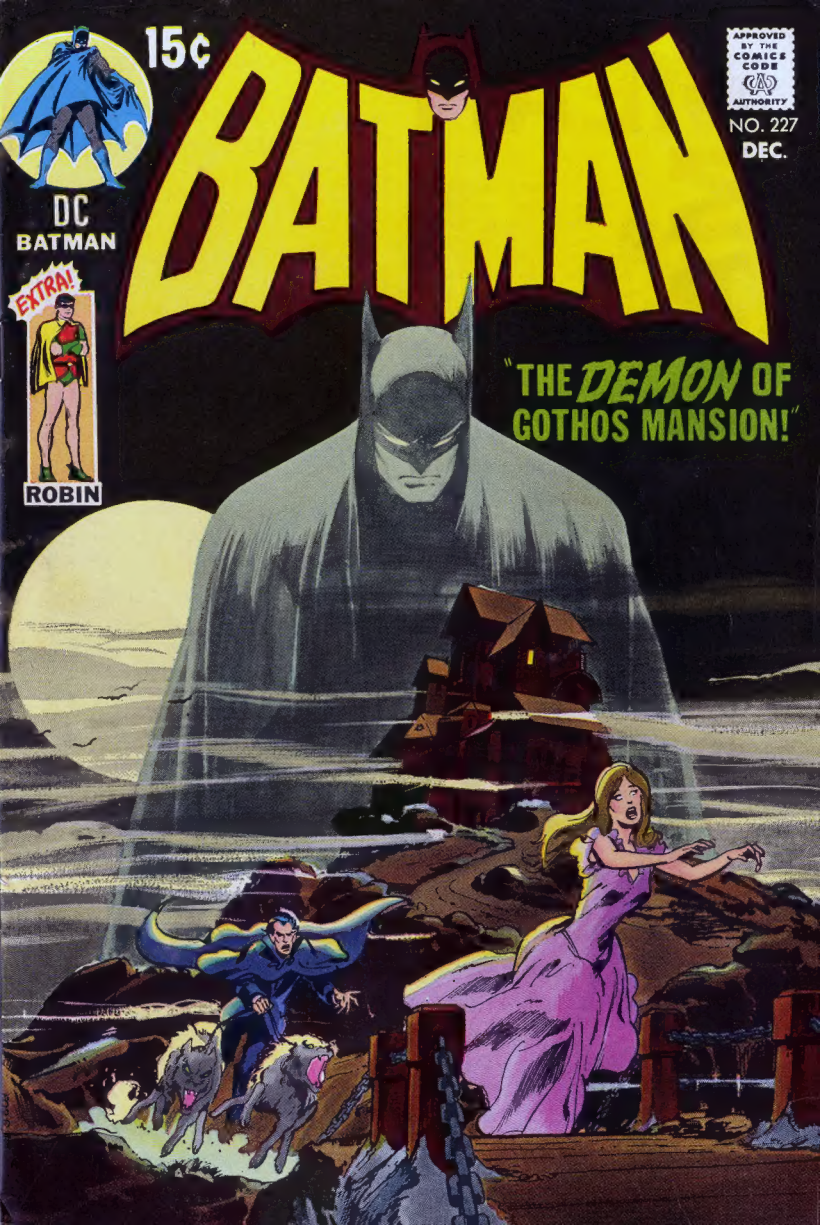
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BATMAN
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
NO. 227
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BATMAN
EXTRA!
ROBIN
"THE DEMON OF GOTHOS MANSION!"

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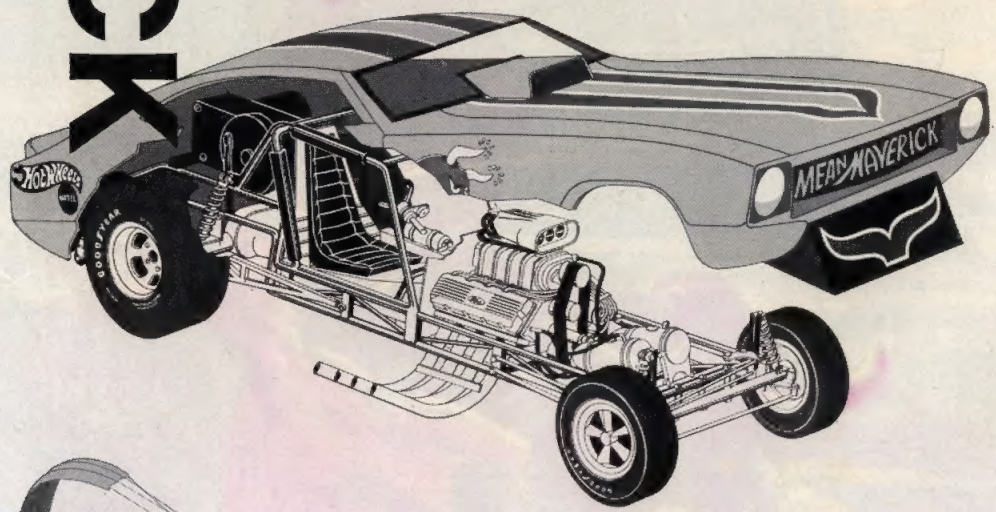

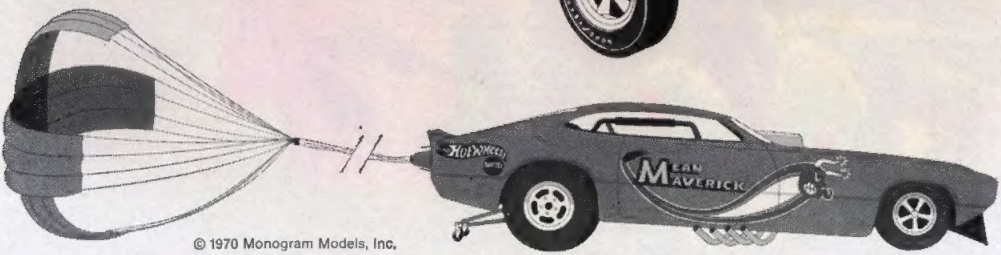

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IN ALL THIS BLEAK, CAVERNOUS COUNTRY-SIDE THERE IS BUT A SINGLE GLEAM OF LIGHT--A YELLOWED LUMINESCENCE GLOWING IN A CRUMBLING TOWER--
--AND THEREIN STANDS A LOVELY GIRL, TROUBLED, TERRIFIED--
-- WHILE WITHOUT, AN EERIE FIGURE GLIDES OVER THE TANGLED GROUNDS AS SILENT AS A SHADOW ON SNOW.
NO NOISE, NO MORTAL SOUND BREAKS THE SHROUDED STILLNESS, SAVE THE SCRAPING TOGETHER OF SKELETAL LIMBS IN THE TOPS OF ANCIENT TREES... AND A DISTANT, AGONIZED HOWL THAT MAY BE AN ANIMAL PLEADING FOR THE MOON, OR MAY NOT!
Follow The BATMAN as he plunges into the morass of evil where lurks--
The Demon of Gothos Mansion!
STORY: Denny O'Neil ART: Irv Novick and Dick Giordano
S-516
1

BATMAN, No. 227, Dec., 1970. Published monthly with the exception of April and October, by NATIONAL PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS, INC., 2nd & Dickey Sts., Sparta, Ill. 62286. EDITORIAL, EXECUTIVE OFFICES, 909 THIRD AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022. Julius Schwartz, Editor. Carmine Infantino, Editorial Director. Sol Harrison, Production Manager. Second Class Postage Paid at Sparta, Ill. under the act of March 3, 1879. No subscriptions. For advertising rates address Richard A. Feldon & Co., 41 E. 42nd St., New York, N.Y. 10017. Copyright © National Periodical Publications, Inc., 1970. All rights reserved under International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. No actual persons, living or dead, are intended or should be inferred.

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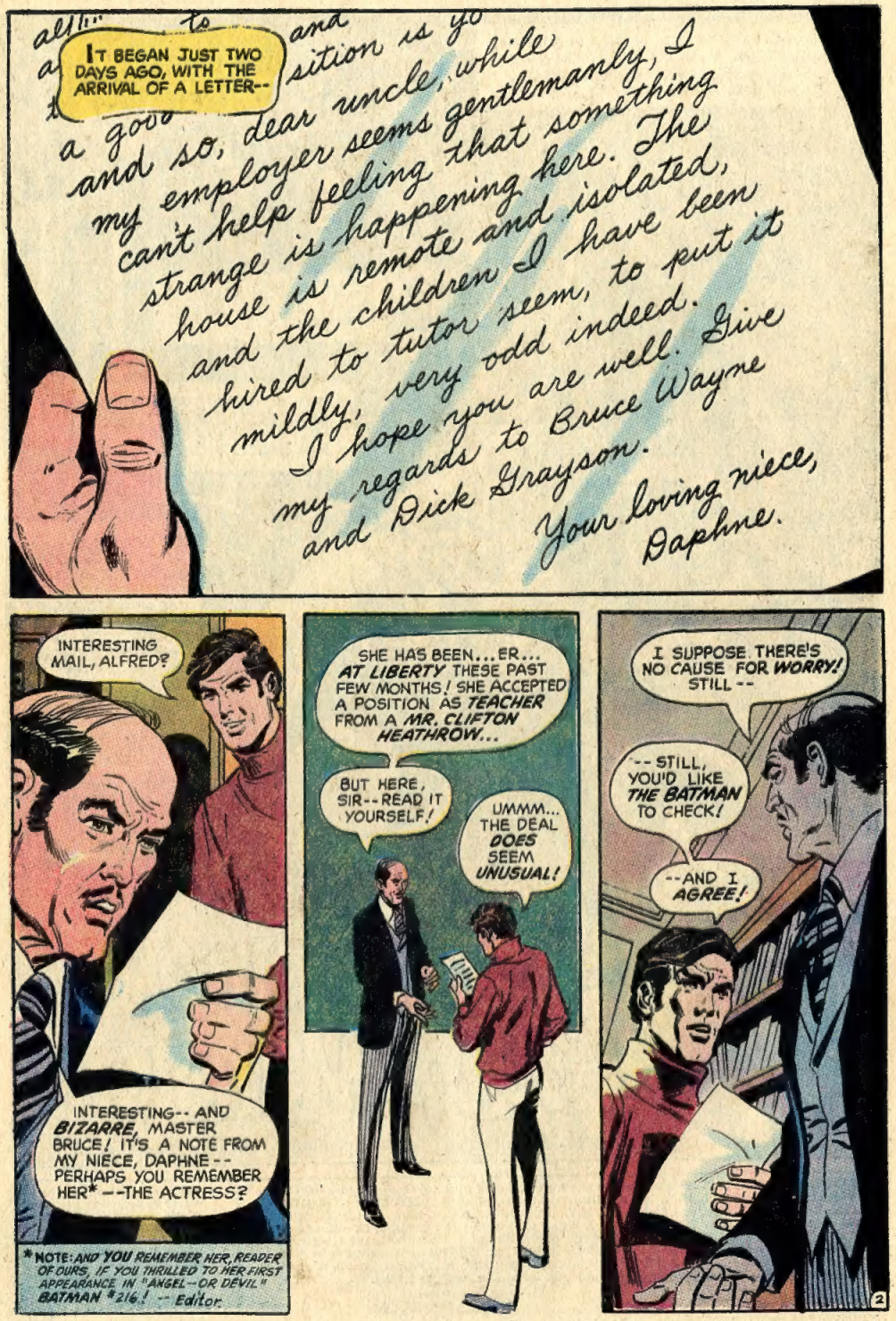
IT BEGAN JUST TWO DAYS AGO, WITH THE ARRIVAL OF A LETTER--
and so, dear uncle, while my employer seems gentlemanly, I can't help feeling that something strange is happening here. The house is remote and isolated, and the children I have been hired to tutor seem, to put it mildly, very odd indeed. I hope you are well. Give my regards to Bruce Wayne and Dick Grayson.
Your loving niece, Daphne.
INTERESTING MAIL, ALFRED?
INTERESTING-- AND BIZARRE, MASTER BRUCE! IT'S A NOTE FROM MY NIECE, DAPHNE-- PERHAPS YOU REMEMBER HER* --THE ACTRESS?
*NOTE: AND YOU REMEMBER HER, READER OF OURS, IF YOU THRILLED TO HER FIRST APPEARANCE IN "ANGEL--OR DEVIL" BATMAN #216! -- Editor.
SHE HAS BEEN...ER... AT LIBERTY THESE PAST FEW MONTHS! SHE ACCEPTED A POSITION AS TEACHER FROM A MR. CLIFTON HEATHROW...
BUT HERE, SIR--READ IT YOURSELF!
UMMM... THE DEAL DOES SEEM UNUSUAL!
I SUPPOSE THERE'S NO CAUSE FOR WORRY! STILL --
-- STILL, YOU'D LIKE THE BATMAN TO CHECK!
--AND I AGREE!
2

THUS IT IS THAT THE CAPED CRUSADER STANDS ON A BARREN ESTATE IN THE MOUNTAINS A HUNDRED MILES FROM THE NEAREST TOWN--
THOSE FELLOWS APPEAR TO BE GUARDS! I COULD EVADE THEM--EASILY!
--BUT I'M CURIOUS...
...WHY WOULD ANYONE POST WATCHMEN HERE? I'LL TEST THEIR HOSTILITY--BY SHOWING MYSELF!
GOOD EVENING, GENTLEMEN! BIT NIPPY FOR THIS TIME OF YEAR, ISN'T IT?
EH--? WHO BE THAT?
--'TIS A GIANT BAT!
NONSENSE YOU TALK, EPHRAIM! 'TIS NO MORE THAN A MAN! STRIKE A FLAME--WE'LL HAVE A LOOK AT HIM!
FEEL FREE! MIND TELLING ME THE NAME OF THIS PLACE?
GOTHOS MANSION--AND WE'VE NO LIKING FOR STRANGERS!
WELL, NOW THAT YOU'VE SEEN ME, I'LL BE STROLLING ON!
BUT NOT FAR--!
WHEN THEY SAID THEY DIDN'T LIKE STRANGERS --THEY WEREN'T KIDDING!
FORTUNATELY, I WAS PREPARED FOR A SNEAK ATTACK!
3

FOR LONG YEARS, THIS BATMAN HAS TRAINED--AND OTHER MEN, ARMED THOUGH THEY BE, ARE NO MATCH FOR HIM...
4

SWIFTLY, NOISELESSLY, THE BATMAN CROSSES THE GROUNDS, AND...
SOMEONE'S COMING--! I MAY LEARN MORE UNSEEN...
WHEN WE POSITION THE ALTAR, ALL WILL BE IN READINESS, ELDER HEATHROW!
EXCELLENT, EXCELLENT! BE MERRY, FELLOWS OF THE COVEN OF GOTHOS MANSION--
--TONIGHT, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN TWO CENTURIES, WE RAISE THE SPIRIT OF THE DEMON BALLK--
THE TRIO CONTINUES THROUGH THE UNDERBRUSH, LEAVING ONLY A FAINT SMELL OF MUSK IN THE CHILL NIGHT AIR--
DAPHNE HAS STUMBLED INTO TROUBLE--THE WORST KIND! A COVEN IS A GROUP DEDICATED TO BLACK MAGIC--
--AND I RECALL THAT BALLK IS ONE OF THE NASTIEST CREATURES IN MYTHOLOGY!
ELDER HEATHROW IS APPARENTLY THE CHIEF WARLOCK--AND OBVIOUSLY MAD--
--WHICH DOESN'T MAKE HIM ANY LESS DANGEROUS!
THERE'S ONLY ONE WINDOW LIT IN THE HOUSE!

SO THAT'S WHERE I BEGIN LOOKING FOR DAPHNE!
ALMOST AS THOUGH HE WERE WEIGHTLESS, THE BATMAN RISES UP THE SMOOTH, STONE TOWER...
PLEASE... PLEASE, MISTER HEATHROW-- LET ME OUT!
YOU HAVE NO CAUSE FOR FEAR, MISS PENNYWORTH!
THE-- BATMAN--!!
I'VE COME TO TAKE YOU AWAY FROM HERE, DAPHNE!
THANK HEAVEN!-- IT'S BEEN HORRID! THEY MADE ME WEAR THESE AWFUL, OLD CLOTHES... THEY'VE KEPT ME LOCKED UP...
...AND THE CHILDREN I WAS HIRED TO TEACH... I DISCOVERED THEY'RE NOT REALLY KIDS--THEY'RE A PAIR OF HIDEOUS DWARVES!
CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.
6

THE WORLD'S FASTEST BIG RACERS!

WITH FANTASTIC

SSP SUPER SONIC POWER

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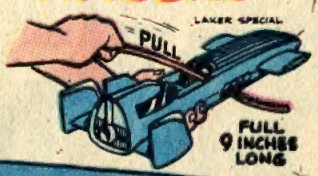
ONE QUICK PULL REVS POWER WHEEL UP TO 20,000 RPM AND...

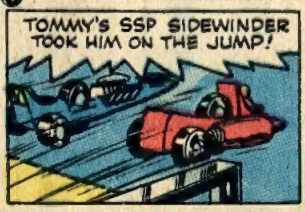


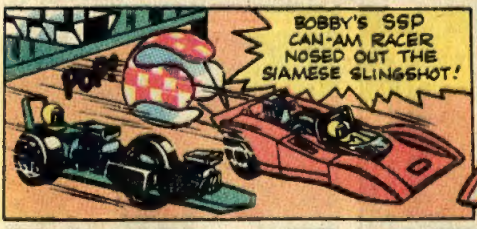
Kenner

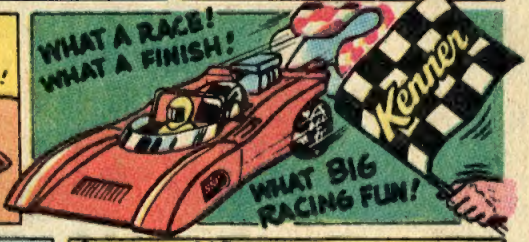
THEY'RE OFF!

FAST! 400 SCALE MPH!

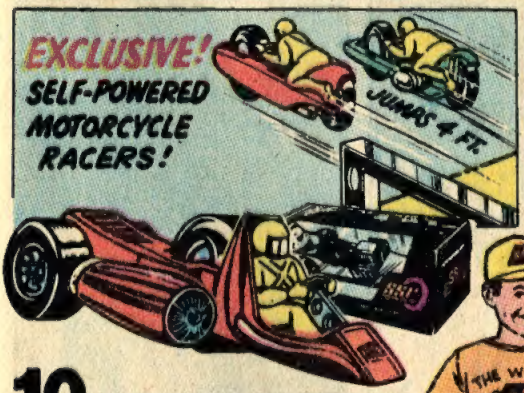
NO TRACK! NO BATTERIES! NO MOTOR! NO PUSH!







EXCLUSIVE! SELF-POWERED MOTORCYCLE RACERS!



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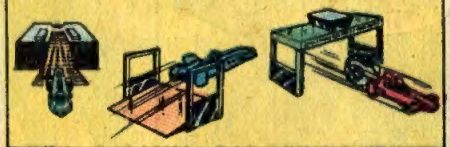

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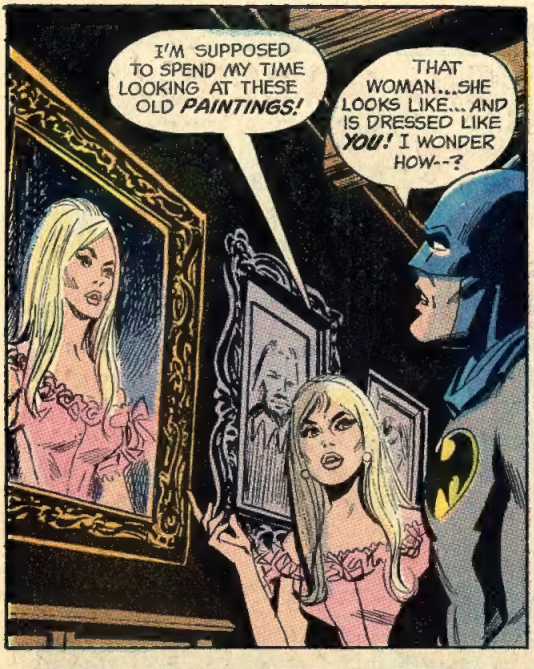
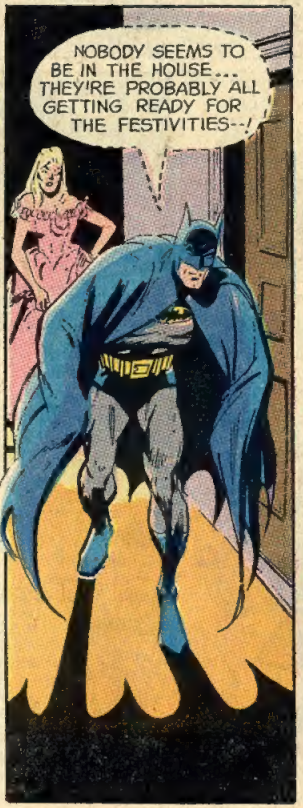
Offer Expires Feb. 1, 1971

Allow 3 weeks for delivery

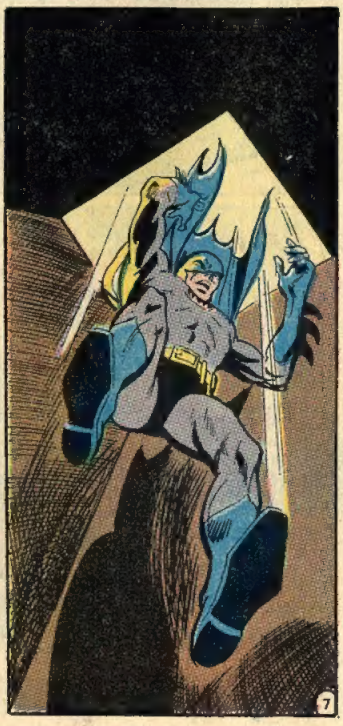
10 INDIVIDUAL RACERS COMPLETE WITH POWER T-STICK READY TO RACE!



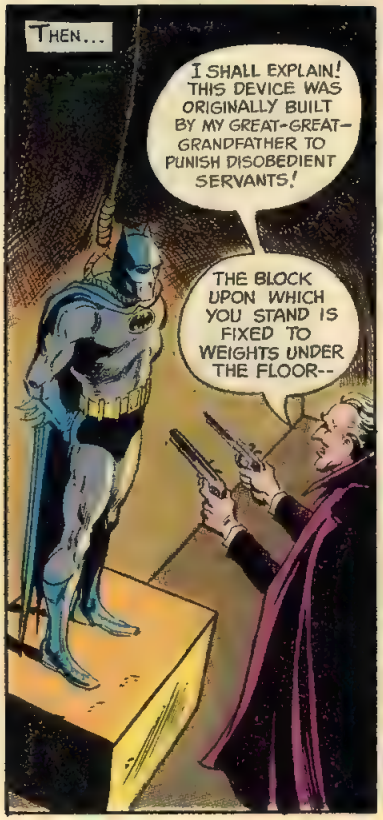
WE'LL FIGURE IT OUT LATER AFTER I GET YOU TO SAFETY--!
THEY MAY HAVE SPOTTED MY ROPE, SO-- THIS LOCK IS OLD... RUSTY... SHOULDN'T BE TOO DIFFICULT TO BREAK!

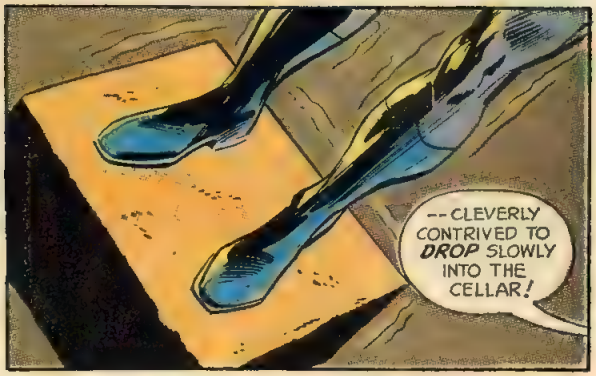


BUT... SUDDENLY... THE ANCIENT FLOOR GIVES WAY... AND BEFORE THE BATMAN CAN REACT, HE IS PLUMMETING DOWNWARD...



AHH...THE BATMAN! MY SENTRIES WARNED ME YOU WERE ABOUT!
KINDLY DO NOT STRUGGLE! MY PISTOLS ARE AGED, BUT IN EXCELLENT CONDITION!
YOU SHALL DIE--EXQUISITELY!


THEN...
I SHALL EXPLAIN! THIS DEVICE WAS ORIGINALLY BUILT BY MY GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER TO PUNISH DISOBEDIENT SERVANTS!
THE BLOCK UPON WHICH YOU STAND IS FIXED TO WEIGHTS UNDER THE FLOOR--



IN A QUARTER OF AN HOUR OR SO, THE NOOSE AROUND YOUR NECK WILL BEAR YOUR FULL WEIGHT...HANGING YOU, OF COURSE!
WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, EXPLAIN MORE! WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH MISS PENNYWORTH?

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.

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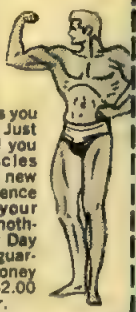

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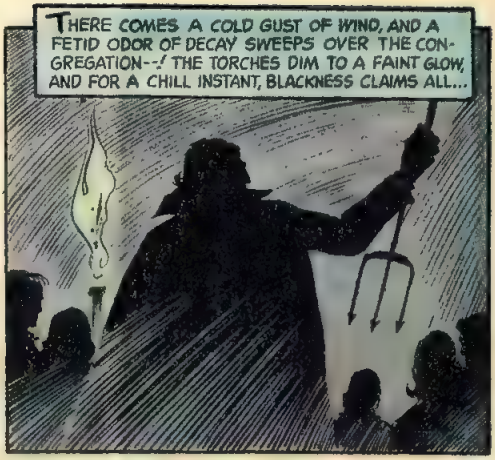
FOR YEARS, I SEARCHED FOR A MAIDEN BORN PRECISELY AT MIDNIGHT ON OCTOBER 31ST ... A MINUTE EITHER WAY WOULD NOT HAVE SUFFICED!
FOR IF SUCH A ONE IS SACRIFICED THIS NIGHT, THE SPIRIT OF BALLK WILL ARISE ONCE MORE!
SIX GENERATIONS MY FAMILY HAS LIVED TO DO THIS DEED!
AND MISS PENNYWORTH FULFILLS YOUR CONDITIONS?
YOU REALIZE, YOU'RE MAD?!
NOT AT ALL! MY ANCESTOR ACTUALLY SUCCEEDED IN LIBERATING THE DEMON!
THE GHOST OF THE MAIDEN THEN SLAIN STILL WALKS THESE VERY HALLS!
AND NOW-- FAREWELL!
ALREADY... HARD TO BREATHE! I WON'T LAST FIFTEEN MINUTES!
TOES BARELY TOUCHING THE PLATFORM BUT THERE IS A CHANCE... A SLIM ONCE...
THAT TORCH! IF I CAN TENSE MY NECK MUSCLES... KEEP FROM STRANGLING...

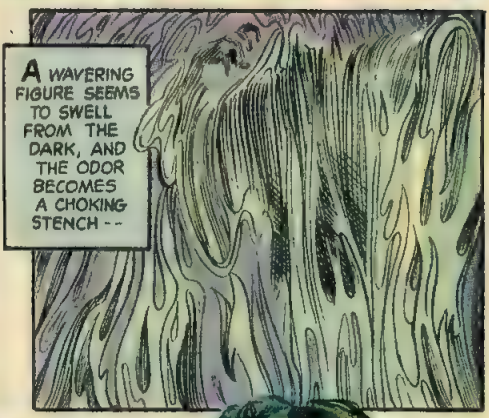
...START MYSELF SWINGING FORWARD...
...NOW BACKWARD...
...TO GATHER ENOUGH MOMENTUM...
...TO REACH IT...
MADE IT! NOW TO TWIST AROUND!
GOTTA GET MY HANDS LOOSE...
BURNS LIKE THE DEVIL...BUT BETTER BURNS THAN DEATH!

NEED A MOMENT ...TO CATCH MY BREATH!
YOU MUST NOT TARRY! THE RITES OF BALLK HAVE BEGUN!
DAPHNE! YOU ESCAPED!
I AM... NOT DAPHNE PENNYWORTH! BUT I WILL LEAD YOU TO HER!
THE COVEN HOLDS ITS UNSPEAKABLE CEREMONY IN THE OLD CHAPEL! THIS WAY...HURRY!
HER VOICE... SO ODDLY HOLLOW-- LIKE AN ECHO!
AND HER TOUCH... LIGHT AS A WHISPER! BUT--FIRM!
THAT NEAR-HANGING MUST'VE DONE THINGS TO MY MIND--
...BECAUSE I DON'T EVEN KNOW HER NAME--AND YET I'M FILLED WITH AN OVER-WHELMING FEELING OF... LOVE!
THERE LIES THE CHAPEL... THE COVEN PRANCES WITHIN! I CAN TAKE YOU NO FURTHER!
YOURS IS A HOLY MISSION-- FOR THE ELDER IS A PIT OF EVIL!
GO!

WAIT FOR ME... PLEASE!
I WAIT... THAT IS MY CURSE! PRECIOUS SECONDS TICK AWAY-- BE ABOUT YOUR TASK!
INSIDE, THE COVEN BEGINS A DANCE OF DARKEST MAGIC, AND DEFILES THE EARTH WITH ITS CHANT--
Mighty demon, heed us, thy suppli- cants!
BE STILL, FAITHFUL ONES--!
FOR SIX GENERATIONS, THE HEATHROWS HAVE PRESERVED THIS SPOT AS IT WAS WHEN LAST BALLK VISITED!
NO TRACE OF THE UNBELIEVING WORLD HAVE WE PERMITTED INSIDE THESE BOUNDARIES!
PATIENTLY, FROM DISTANCE PLACES, I HAVE GATHERED YOU WHO WORSHIP AS DO I!
OUR LONG VIGIL ENDS! THE MOMENT OF FULFILLMENT IS AT HAND!
12

HEAR US, O BALLK... UNTO YOU I GIVE THIS MAIDEN, THAT ONCE MORE YOU MAY STAND AMONGST US!

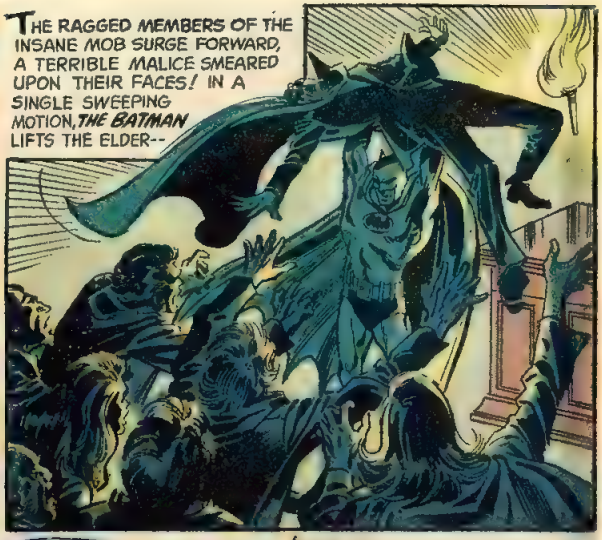

THERE COMES A COLD GUST OF WIND, AND A FETID ODOR OF DECAY SWEEPS OVER THE CONGREGATION--! THE TORCHES DIM TO A FAINT GLOW, AND FOR A CHILL INSTANT, BLACKNESS CLAIMS ALL...


A WAVERING FIGURE SEEMS TO SWELL FROM THE DARK, AND THE ODOR BECOMES A CHOKING STENCH --

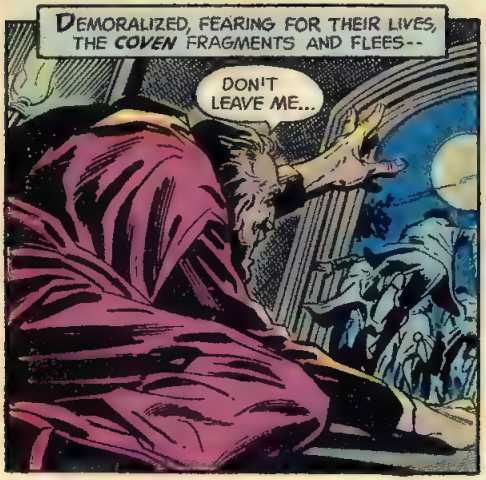
THEN, THE FLAMES SPURT TO FULL BRIGHTNESS AGAIN, AND...
THE CEREMONY IS OVER, ELDER! YOUR BALLK WILL REMAIN IN WHATEVER HELL SPAWNED HIM!

NO! THE DEMON MUST BE SERVED--!

PUT THAT PITCHFORK DOWN!
SERVANTS OF BALLK --AID ME!


THE RAGGED MEMBERS OF THE INSANE MOB SURGE FORWARD, A TERRIBLE MALICE SMEARED UPON THEIR FACES! IN A SINGLE SWEEPING MOTION, THE BATMAN LIFTS THE ELDER--

--AND FLINGS HIM...


DEMORALIZED, FEARING FOR THEIR LIVES, THE COVEN FRAGMENTS AND FLEES--
DON'T LEAVE ME...

I AM ALONE... DESERTED BY ALL!
AND YOU, BALLK-- HAVE YOU ALSO DESERTED ME--?
THEN... I DIE...!

HIS BLOOD POUNDING, *THE BATMAN* RUNS OUT OF THE CHAPEL, HIS EYES STRAINING UNTIL HE SEES THE WOMAN HE SEEKS... AND A PURE JOY CATCHES HIS VOICE AS HE CALLS TO HER...

FRANTICALLY FOLLOWING, HE PLUNGES INTO THE FOREST... AND STOPS, NUMBED, AS HIS GAZE FASTENS ON AN IMAGE, FIXED TO A TREE, SHIMMERING IN THE LIGHT OF A MOON THAT HAS JUST RISEN...

DIRECT CURRENTS

ALL-STAR WESTERN brings you the second stirring episodes in **two new series when its January** issue (#3) hits the stands, **Oct. 15! You'll see Gil Kane's** fabulous work on **OUTLAW and Gray Morrow's** amazing art on **EL DIABLO! Both stories** came from the enchanted **typewriter of Bob Kanigher,** who does everything **from Romance to War**—and does it **well!** If the **Old West is your bag, this is** where it is! **So get it!**

When **Alfred's niece takes a job** in an eerie manor, the **BATMAN decides to snoop** around and see what strange things are going on. What he finds is much more than he **ever expected—"The Demon of Gothos Mansion"**—one of the weirdest tales of the **Caped Crime-fighter's career.** Also in this **December issue (#227), Robin** starts a new series of solo adventures in the **BATMAN** mag. The one's called **"Help Me—I Think I'm Dead!"** If that title grabs you, be sure and grab the magazine on **Oct. 10.**

THE FLASH heads for movieland and runs smack-dab into an eerie set of happenings that would put a horror movie to shame. What can I say after I've said the title—**"The Satan Circle"?** And for **you Kid Flash** fans, editor **Julie Schwartz** promises **a stirring** solo adventure called **"The Accusation"**—full of top **Flash**-y action. This is the **December issue (#202),** on sale **Oct. 20.**

There's a double treat in the **January WITCHING HOUR!** Author **Steve Skeates** proves he's a triple-threat man with three stories—all based on **the double** nature of man! **Gil Kane** and **Dan Adkins** turned out a top job on **"Double Cross"; Al Toth** did the art honors on **"Double Edge"**; and **George Tuska** handled the third tale—**"Double Take"!** Our **Witches** will be there to introduce the fright-tales that tell of **"Double, double** toil and trouble!" It's issue **12,** on sale **Oct. 22.**

Enemy Ace and the **Unknown Soldier** headline the great **January** ish of **STAR SPANGLED WAR STORIES! Rittmeister Von Hammer** soars through 15 pages of searing air action in the skies of **World War I!** Then comes the intriguing origin of the **Unknown Soldier!** If you haven't seen these fab features, which have the comic world talking, you'd better get **SS #154** when it goes on sale—**Oct. 22.**

One of the most offbeat tales of the year comes along in **THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD #93 (January).** Can you picture the **Batman** in the **House of Mystery?** Well, that's it—**a weirdie** introduced by that little old caretaker, **Cain,** and featuring the **Masked Manhunter.** Scripting honors this time go to the devastating **Denny O'Neil,** while the artwork was done by amazing **Neal Adams!** If it's something different you hanker after, this is a must! It's on sale **Oct. 27.**

The **December** issue of **ADVENTURE** is **#400** . . . and marks the **35th anniversary** of the mag, which started with the **December, 1935** issue as NEW COMICS. For the occasion, **Mike Sekowsky** has answered one of the most persistent requests from you fans—to bring back their favorite villainess, **Black Flame,** to battle **Supergirl** once more! Three of the criminals from the **Phantom Zone** get into the act, too—in an issue that is really **Special!** It goes on sale **Oct. 29!**

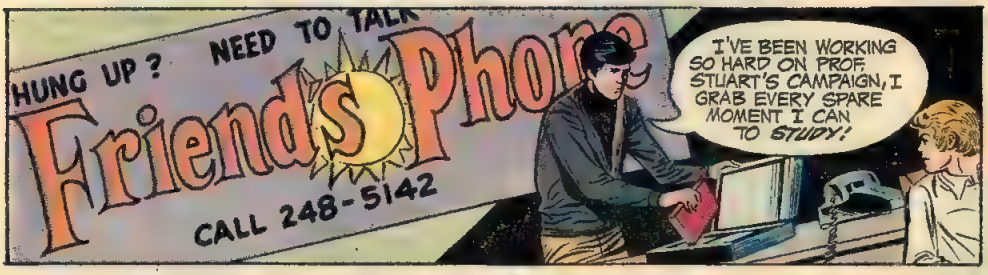
You met the **League of Assassins** in the November issue of **DETECTIVE** (and if you didn't, you missed a doozy of a story)! Now, in the **December** issue, this band of killers is back to battle the **Batman** in a tension-tale titled **"Your Servant of Death—Dr. Darrk!"** Also, with **Robin** moving over to BATMAN, **Batgirl** takes over the second spot in **DETECTIVE** on a regular basis, beginning with this issue—**#406**—in a tale which is sheer dynamite—as you can gather from its title—**The Explosive Circle!"** On sale **Oct. 29.**

Prepare to learn the mysterious **"Secret of Superman's Fortress"**—something the **Man of Might** has hidden from the world, but which is revealed to you in the **December issue of ACTION!** That's not all, either; a brand-new, updated diagram of the **Fortress of Solitude** is included here, in issue **395.** Find out all you've wanted to know about **Superman's** secret sanctum—and top it off with an intriguing tale called **"Cards of Catastrophe!"** It's on sale **Oct. 29!**

And before I go, let me put in a plug for **DC's** great laugh-getters—**BINKY** (on sale **Oct. 7**), **SUGAR AND SPIKE** (on sale **Oct. 13**) and **DEBBI'S DATES** (on sale **Oct. 22**). To try to tell you what's in each one would be impossible in this small space—and it's going to become more impossible. Because, beginning with the **1971** issues, **DATE WITH DEBBI, BINKY, SCOOTER** and **THE THREE MOUSEKETEERS** are all becoming **64-page GIANTS!** And they'll remain on their current bi-monthly schedules! That's **24** king-size laugh-zines a year!

CASEY
THE COP
HANDS UP!
S-615
I'VE CAUGHT YOU AT LAST!
SARGE, I CAPTURED "BABY-FACE" WILLIE, THE BANK ROBBER. WE'LL BE RIGHT DOWN!
HMM...
PD
GOOD WORK, CASEY. HE'S A DANGEROUS MAN!
I SEE YOU GOT THE MONEY HE STOLE ON THE LAST BANK JOB. IS IT ALL THERE?
YESSIR, IT'S ALL HERE - EXCEPT FOR TWO DOLLARS. WE TOOK A TAXI TO THE PRECINCT!
TAXI
THE END

LUCKY IS HUDSON UNIVERSITY--FOR WHEN A STUDENT IS WEARY, FEELING SMALL, AND TIMES ARE ROUGH, THERE ARE THE VOLUNTEER SERVICES OF THE--"FRIENDS PHONE"...
HIYA, TINA...RUSS! SORRY I'M LATE FOR MY SHIFT!
NO PROBLEM, DICK. THE PHONES HAVE BEEN QUIET SO FAR!
YOU SURE CARRY THAT BRIEFCASE EVERYWHERE!

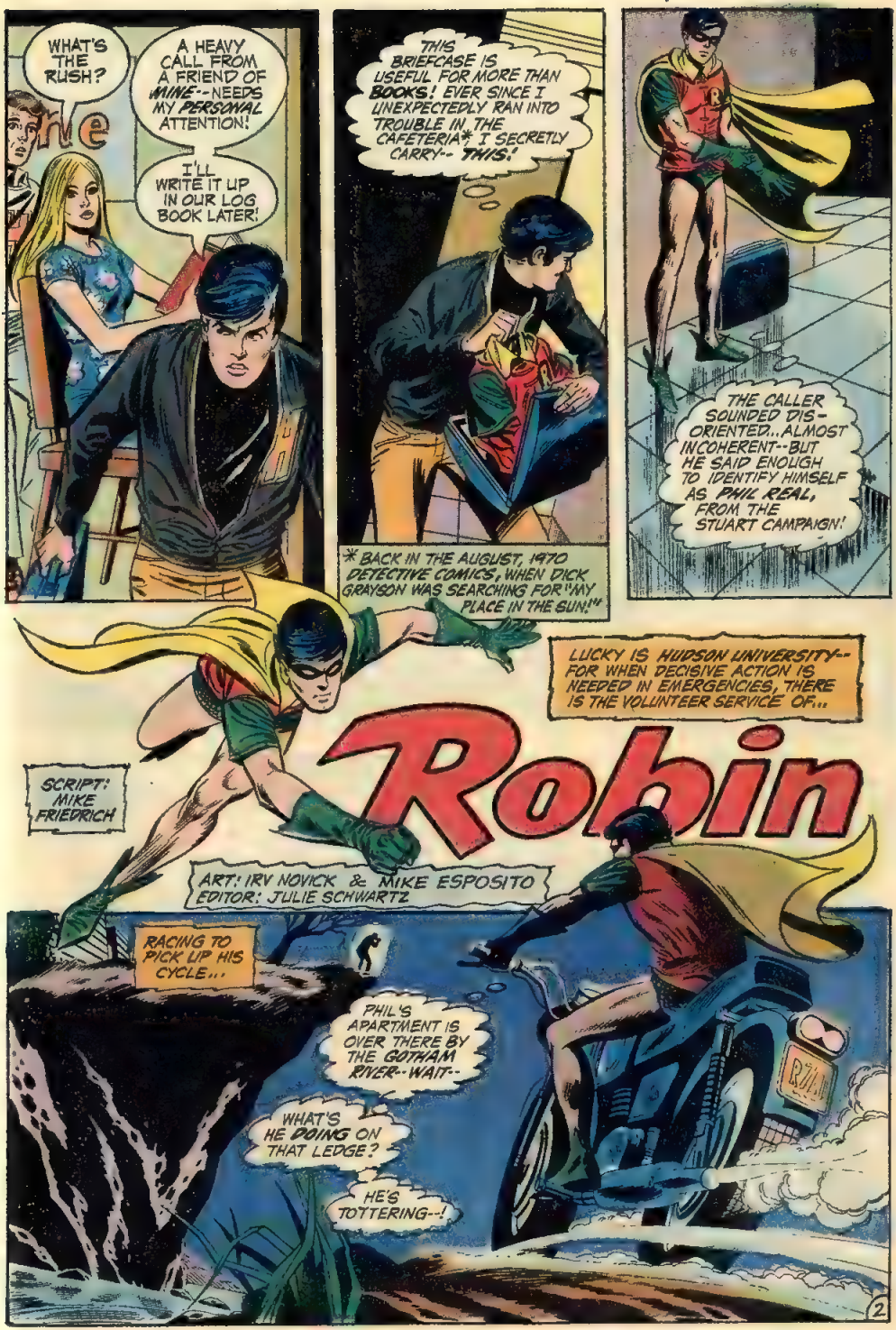

HUNG UP? NEED TO TALK
Friend's Phone
CALL 248-5142
I'VE BEEN WORKING SO HARD ON PROF. STUART'S CAMPAIGN, I GRAB EVERY SPARE MOMENT I CAN TO STUDY!

MY TURN TO ANSWER...
RRING

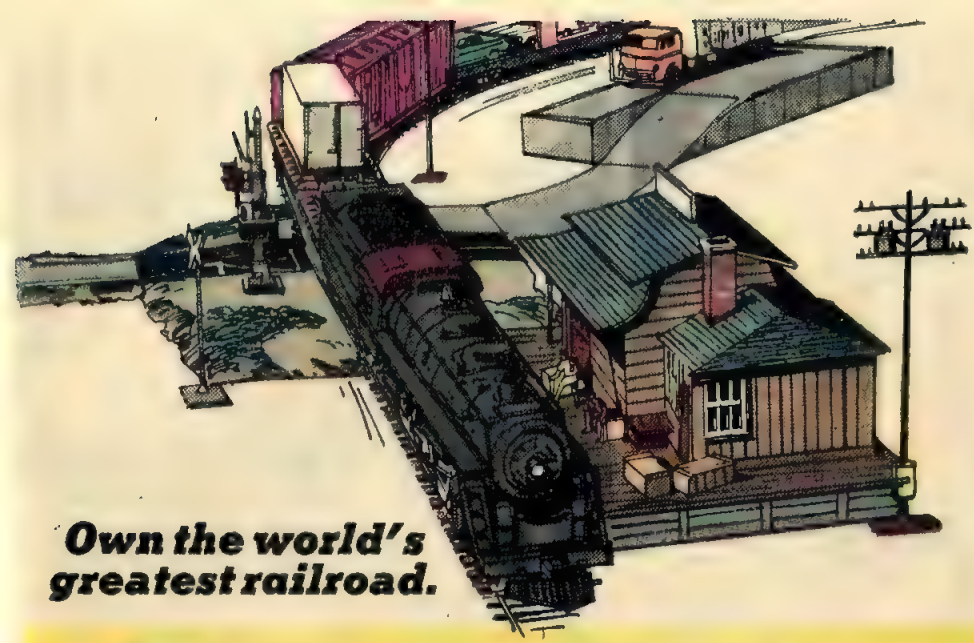
HELLO! HELLO-- WHAT--!?

S-534

HELP ME...
I Think I'm Dead!


WHAT'S THE RUSH?
A HEAVY CALL FROM A FRIEND OF MINE--NEEDS MY PERSONAL ATTENTION!
I'LL WRITE IT UP IN OUR LOG BOOK LATER!
THIS BRIEFCASE IS USEFUL FOR MORE THAN BOOKS! EVER SINCE I UNEXPECTEDLY RAN INTO TROUBLE IN THE CAFETERIA* I SECRETLY CARRY-- THIS!
THE CALLER SOUNDED DISORIENTED..ALMOST INCOHERENT--BUT HE SAID ENOUGH TO IDENTIFY HIMSELF AS PHIL REAL, FROM THE STUART CAMPAIGN!
*BACK IN THE AUGUST, 1970 DETECTIVE COMICS, WHEN DICK GRAYSON WAS SEARCHING FOR "MY PLACE IN THE SUN!"
LUCKY IS HUDSON UNIVERSITY--FOR WHEN DECISIVE ACTION IS NEEDED IN EMERGENCIES, THERE IS THE VOLUNTEER SERVICE OF..
Robin
SCRIPT: MIKE FRIEDRICH
ART: IRV NOVICK & MIKE ESPOSITO
EDITOR: JULIE SCHWARTZ
RACING TO PICK UP HIS CYCLE...
PHIL'S APARTMENT IS OVER THERE BY THE GOTHAM RIVER--WAIT--
WHAT'S HE DOING ON THAT LEDGE?
HE'S TOTTERING--!
2

FALLING...! HE'LL HIT THOSE ROCKS BELOW-- UNLESS I...
CONTACT!
BRR... THIS WATER'S-- COLD!
SLOW MINUTES PASS, UNTIL...
YUK'K... NOT ONLY FREEZING, BUT POLLUTED TOO! LOOK AT ALL THIS CRUD ON MY UNIFORM!
THANK'S, ROBIN! DID I NEARLY GO OFF THE DEEP END!
I'D BETTER EXPLAIN... I'M PUBLICITY PHOTOGRAPHER FOR PROF. "BUCK" STUART'S CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGN--
--AND A CAMERA BUG TO BOOT!
EARLIER TONIGHT, I SPILLED A MESS OF DEVELOPING CHEMICALS ON MYSELF... THEY GOT INTO MY BLOODSTREAM THROUGH A CUT IN MY SKIN!
MY SENSES WENT CRAZY! MY HEAD WAS DEFINITELY UN-TOGETHER... ACTUALLY THOUGHT I WAS DYING!
A PAL NAMED DICK GRAYSON HAD TOLD ME ABOUT A PHONE NUMBER TO CALL WHEN IN TROUBLE, BUT I'M LUCKY YOU HAPPENED TO BE AROUND, ROBIN!
WHY WERE YOU OUT HERE?
DUNNO... GUESS MY MIND WAS CONCENTRATING ON MY JOB!
"BUCK" STUART'S BIG ISSUE IS HOW CONGRESSMAN FORTE CONDONED THE POLLUTION OF GOTHAM RIVER BY THE LOCAL ICM PLANT!
CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.
3



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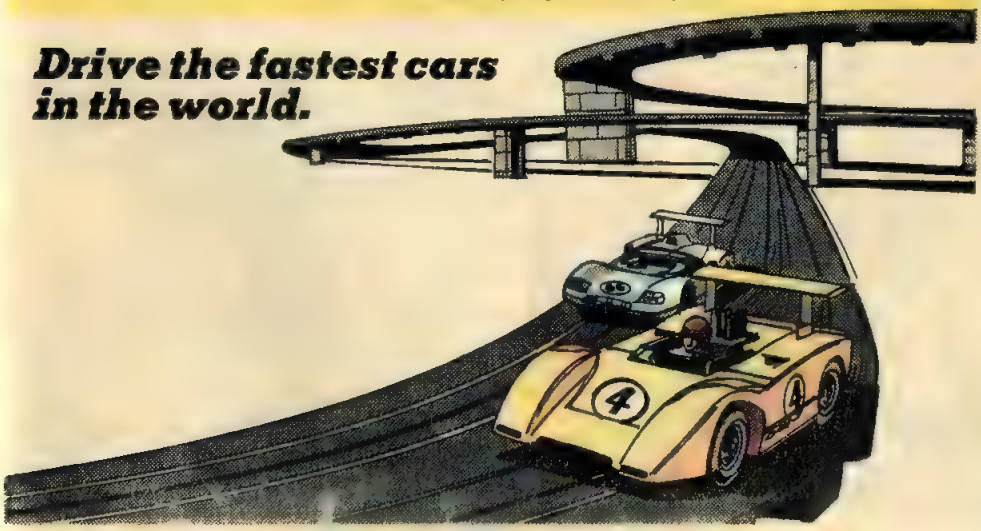
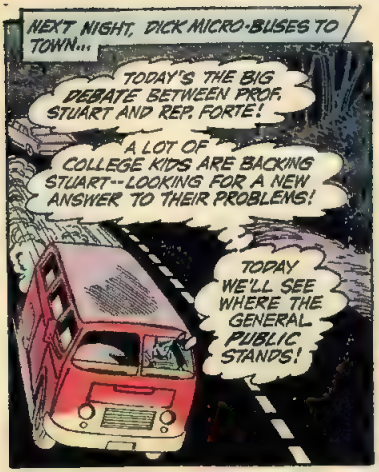
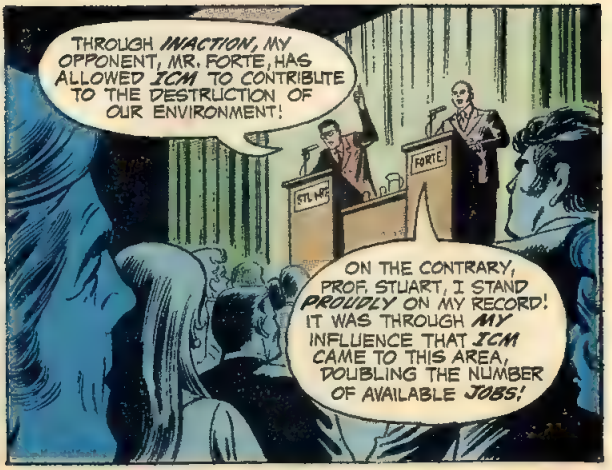
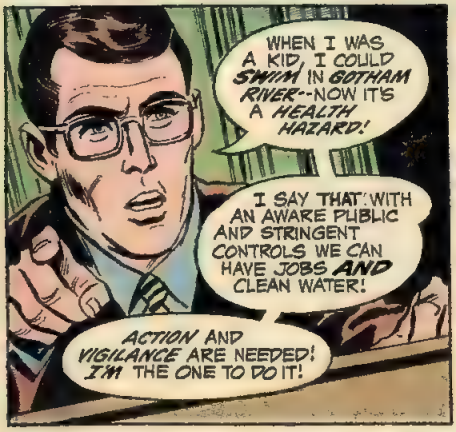
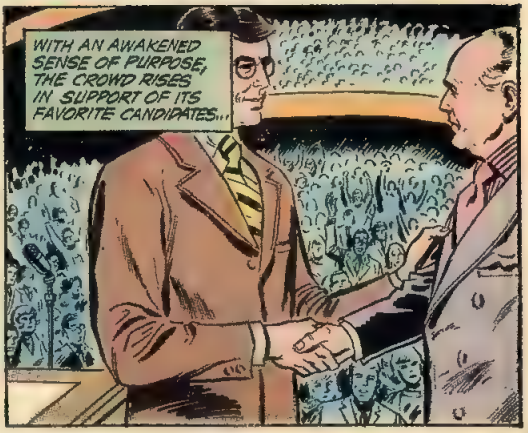


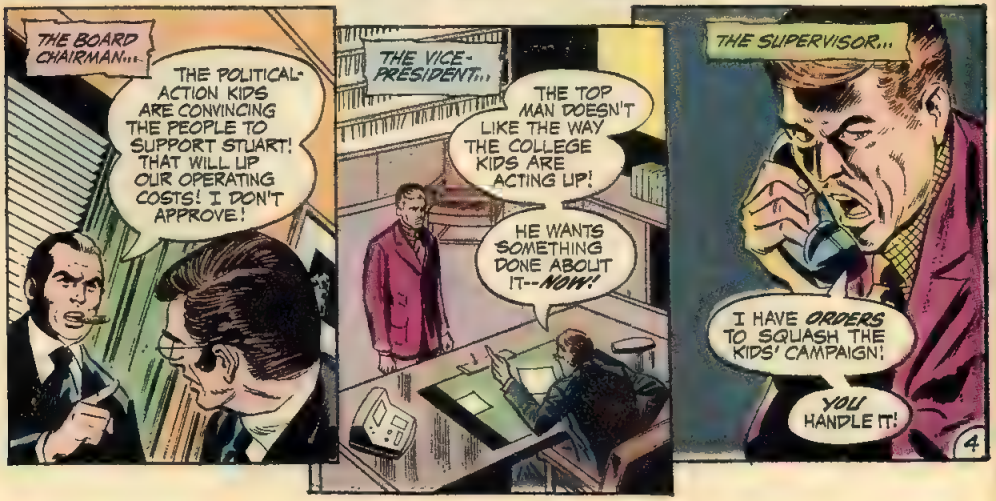

NEXT NIGHT, DICK MICRO-BUSES TO TOWN...
TODAY'S THE BIG DEBATE BETWEEN PROF. STUART AND REP. FORTE!
A LOT OF COLLEGE KIDS ARE BACKING STUART--LOOKING FOR A NEW ANSWER TO THEIR PROBLEMS!
TODAY WE'LL SEE WHERE THE GENERAL PUBLIC STANDS!

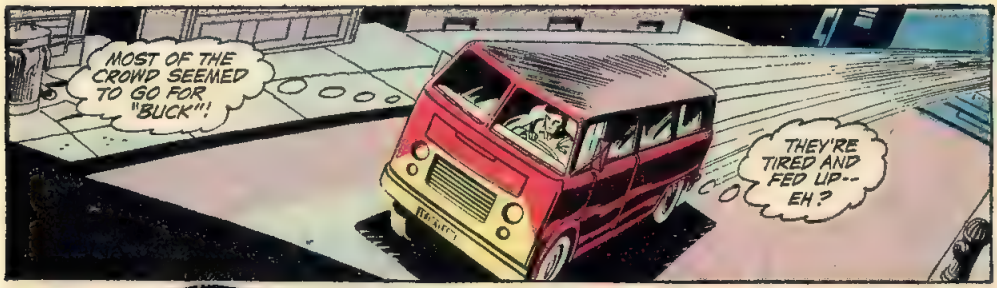

THROUGH INACTION, MY OPPONENT, MR. FORTE, HAS ALLOWED ICM TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE DESTRUCTION OF OUR ENVIRONMENT!
STUART
FORTE
ON THE CONTRARY, PROF. STUART, I STAND PROUDLY ON MY RECORD! IT WAS THROUGH MY INFLUENCE THAT ICM CAME TO THIS AREA, DOUBLING THE NUMBER OF AVAILABLE JOBS!

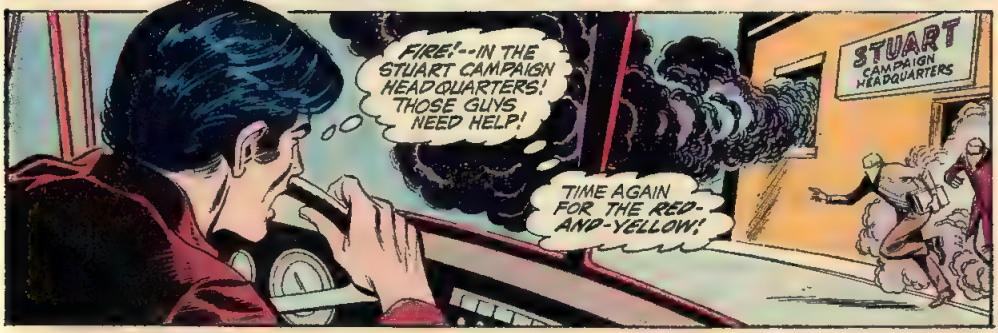

WHEN I WAS A KID, I COULD SWIM IN GOTHAM RIVER--NOW IT'S A HEALTH HAZARD!
I SAY THAT WITH AN AWARE PUBLIC AND STRINGENT CONTROLS WE CAN HAVE JOBS AND CLEAN WATER!
ACTION AND VIGILANCE ARE NEEDED! I'M THE ONE TO DO IT!



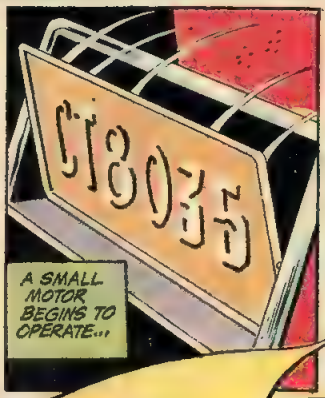
UNFORTUNATELY, HOWEVER, POLITICS ---AND THE AMERICAN DESIRE FOR "MAKING GOOD" IN THE EYES OF ONE'S SUPERIORS--IS RAMPANT WITHIN THE ICM CORPORATION! WITNESS...

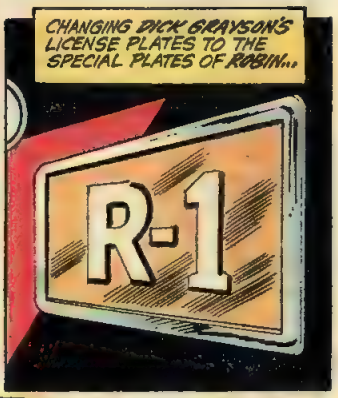

THE BOARD CHAIRMAN...
THE POLITICAL-ACTION KIDS ARE CONVINCING THE PEOPLE TO SUPPORT STUART! THAT WILL UP OUR OPERATING COSTS! I DON'T APPROVE!
THE VICE-PRESIDENT...
THE TOP MAN DOESN'T LIKE THE WAY THE COLLEGE KIDS ARE ACTING UP!
HE WANTS SOMETHING DONE ABOUT IT--NOW!
THE SUPERVISOR...
I HAVE ORDERS TO SQUASH THE KIDS' CAMPAIGN!
YOU HANDLE IT!

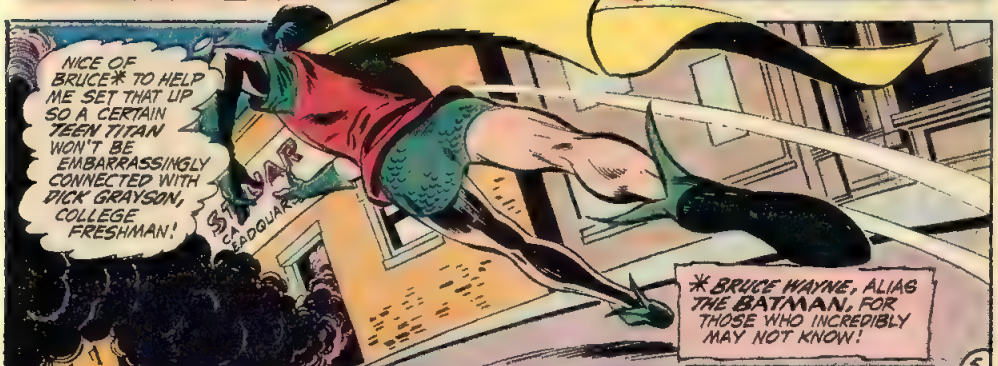



FIRE!--IN THE STUART CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS! THOSE GUYS NEED HELP!
TIME AGAIN FOR THE RED-AND-YELLOW!
STUART
CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS

DICK'S RED MICRO-BUS MAY LOOK INNOCENT, BUT ACTUALLY IT SERVES AN INGENIOUS DOUBLE PURPOSE...






NICE OF BRUCE* TO HELP ME SET THAT UP SO A CERTAIN TEEN TITAN WON'T BE EMBARRASSINGLY CONNECTED WITH DICK GRAYSON, COLLEGE FRESHMAN!
*BRUCE WAYNE, ALIAS THE BATMAN, FOR THOSE WHO INCREDIBLY MAY NOT KNOW!

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.

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$180 both rings
Fantastic fiery diamond in a "modern as tomorrow" setting of 14K gold.
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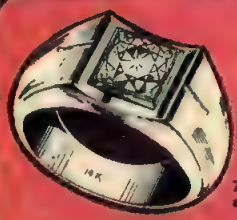

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7 monthly payments of $20 and 1 payment of $15.

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$275 both rings
A large fantastic diamond set in a youthful modern 14K gold setting.
14 monthly payments of $20.

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$275 both rings
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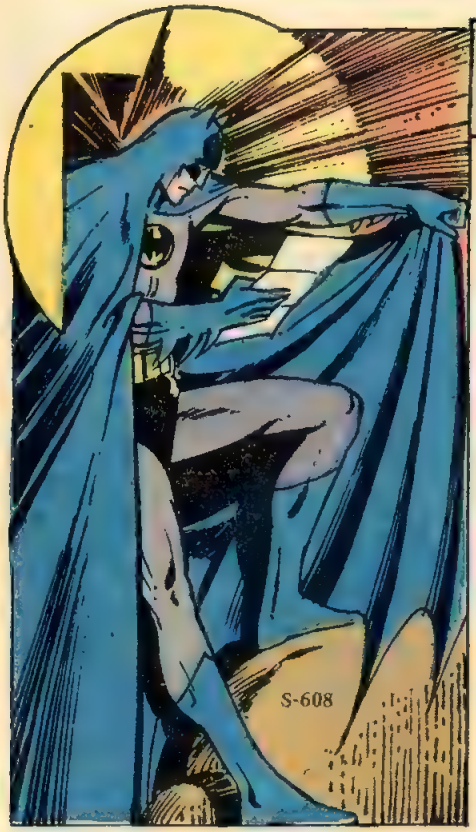
$8.00 charge on all purch[illegible] over postage, shipping, handling.

IT'S OUR CAMPUS DO-GOODER! GIT 'M!
:OOPS: WRONG CONCLUSION! THESE TWO AREN'T HELPING.. THEY STARTED THIS!
THE FIRE'S SPREADING.. GOT TO NAB THESE GUYS FAST!
:COUGH: :COUGH: SMOKE--HARD TO SEE!
HIS COAT--SO THICK--MY PUNCH DIDN'T HAVE MUCH EFFECT...
RRRIP
SO--STRIP ONE COAT--
ZAP
LONG AS YOU'RE SO INTERESTED IN THAT FREAKING PROF....HERE--TAKE A HARD LOOK AT HIS PICTURES!
SNEAKED UP ON ME--UNDER COVER OF SMOKE...
ZUK
GETTING AWAY--LEAVING ME WITH A SORE HEAD AND A PILE OF PHOTOGRAPHS!
BETTER TRY TO HOLD THIS FIRE DOWN TILL THE FIREMEN COME!
BUT THE DAMAGE HAS BEEN DONE--ALL CAMPAIGN LITERATURE AND EQUIPMENT ARE DESTROYED! WHEN THE WORKERS RETURN...
OKAY, FELLAS, I'LL LEVEL WITH YOU! WE'RE OUT OF MONEY AND CAN'T REPLACE ANYTHING!
THAT MEANS WE'VE GOT TO WORK TWICE AS HARD! WE'VE GOT A MOVEMENT GOING HERE AND NO FIRE CAN STOP IT!
6

THIS HAS BEEN THE YEAR OF THE INVOLVED COLLEGE STUDENT...
...THE YEAR HE'S REALIZED THAT HE DOES HAVE INFLUENCE IN SOCIETY...
...THE YEAR OF NEW LIFE, NEW IDEAS, SOMETHING TO SAY.
VOTE FOR STUART
AND THOUGH THE TOWNSPEOPLE OF NEW CARTHAGE TEND TO DISTRUST THE UNIVERSITY, THEY STOP...
...AND THEY LISTEN...
UNTIL...
DICK! THIS PAPER... IT'S AWFUL!
HUH-- WHAT'S HAPPENED?
A PICTURE OF PROFESSOR STUART PAYING SOME GUYS TO POLLUTE THE RIVER--AND HELP HIS CAMPAIGN-ISSUE AGAINST REPRESENTATIVE FORTE!
WITH THE ELECTION JUST A FEW DAYS OFF, THIS IS GONNA HURT!
IT'S A SMEAR!
ART PAYS TO POLLUTE
AND HURT IT DOES!
NEW CARTHAGE TRIBUNE
FORTE OVERTAKES STUART IN POLL!
RUNAWAY VICTORY FORECAST!
ALLEGED PAYOFF HURTS FORTE CAMPAIGN
IS THIS REALLY THE END..? BE HERE NEXT ISSUE FOR "TEMPERATURE BOILING-- AND RISING!"



LETTERS to the BATMAN

Dear Editor:

In a carton, under a staircase, carefully wrapped in a plastic bag, is *Detective Comics* No. 139. This semi-oldie, from 1948, contained a story, "The Crimes in Jade," dealing with jade smugglers, Chinese-Americans, and a murder. I look back and picture Bill Finger researching the story, uncovering facts to be slipped into the story-line as extraneous prefab. The scene was Gotham City's Chinatown, and the cover pictured a killer, armed with a Samuri sword, perched on a huge statue, and, in line with the publishing gimmick of sensationalism, about to cut a shank portion out of *Batman*.

That was 1948, near the end of what just about everyone calls *Batman's Golden Age*.

This, however, is 1970, and a second magazine beside me is *Batman* No. 224. The cover shows a huge hulk (sorry) about to dump *Batman* into a huge paddlewheel. Sensational, glaring, gaudy. The similarity between the two issues doesn't end there, though.

A jazz musician, an old, downbeat, blind Negro walks on a street in New Orleans, greets and is greeted by a policeman, and is then yanked into an alley, and beaten to death. The muggers, silhouetted against the lights of a city, search for some unknown object and not finding it, melt away into the inky blackness.

It's all there. The melodrama, the melancholy, the untouchable air of that 1948 story. There's a murder mystery which turns out not to be a murder mystery, gobs of action, an unusual setting, and a tightly woven plot. There, the similarity ends, because this *is* 1970, and not 1948, and the writer is Denny O'Neil and not Bill Finger. And because of these differences, "Carnival of the Cursed" was, in this reader's opinion, a classic, and not a sales-minded try at all the gimmicks of the early *Batman*. There's a "human" *Batman* who reads a headline in an unnamed tabloid, rips and crumples it in disgust, and tosses it on the floor for all (readers) to see. It's an account of a musician's death, and it sends *Batman* off to New Orleans to track down the killer.

Although the story was dotted with such "clever" quips as "Vermin—crawl back into your hole!" and "'Cause I coulda *swore* I just seen a giant bat!", it was excellent. Irv Novick's pencils were fine and Giordano's inks blended in better than in past issues.

But the script deserves more comment than the art, I feel. Denny O'Neil is improving. He put a note of subtlety in the story and carried through with a smooth flow of action that almost never seemed to stop. Moreover, he centered the story around a society that many of us know little or nothing about. The old jazz musicians seemed larger-than-life, integrated, and terribly, *terribly* real. This issue was close to flawless, and certainly the best since the "Big Change."

—CLEM ROBINS, Sheffield, Mass.

(The "beat" (New Orleans style) goes on with harmonious praise from reader after reader—proving that this issue can't be beat!—Editor*)*

*****

Dear Editor:

I've just spent about twenty minutes searching through my thesaurus . . . no luck. The new *Batman* is beyond description. "Carnival of the Cursed" was, as usual, an excellent example of this. I don't think a story has ever been written focusing on jazz, and this was a more than welcome treat. How can you possibly realize how much fans adore *Batman* now that the "Big Change" is in effect? It is not just the superb plots; the magnificent artwork; it is that now, BATMAN HAS SOUL! *Batman* is a human being now; the fact that he *seems* like a god now makes no difference! We readers can relate to *The Batman* now (we love the use of the word "The" in his name); he is . . . fantastic!

Examples in the story itself include the second page: does not *Batman* have emotions too? Pages nine and ten, which bring back *The Batman* as the cunning creature of the night he was always meant to be. Pages fifteen and sixteen . . . *Batman:* the death-cheater! The final page: things do not necessarily have to have a happy ending in *Batman* anymore.

And the letters are more intellectual now (with some exceptions, like this one), so that *Batman* is becoming like the works of Shakespeare . . . there is so much to comment on that you must *search* for.

—JEFF RISTINE, Ann Arbor, Mich.

(To our personal knowledge, "Carnival of the Cursed" was not the first comicstory to feature jazz as an essential element. That honor goes to "King of New Orleans," originally published in the Dec., 1962 Strange Adventures*—and currently (and coincidentally) reprinted in the Dec., 1970* Strange Adventures.*—*Editor*)*

Dear Editor:

Unfortunately, it seems the best method of obtaining a "regular's" status in your letter columns is to become hypercritical and downright stubborn. It's also too bad (?) that I just can't bring myself to become unjust to what must be recognized as comics' best character . . . *The Batman*. The August #224 issue is another bit of convincing proof to add to that claim.

Dennis O'Neil has conceived yet another macabre tale and Irv Novick surpassed his own outstanding talent in producing a mysterious novel for which the *Bat*-fan has been clamoring! The human touches which were incorporated . . . the dialect, the old jazz funeral, the carnival, the sternwheeler . . . made the eerie setting that much more realistic. Dennis's characterization was also superb, as he fashioned living personalities of the main people involved. The murder and all further events were linked expertly together and the solemn ending was . . . *exquisite!*

Meanwhile, Irv Novick turned in his finest performance to date. Neal Adams might be everyone else's "*man for Batman*" (he is one of my all-time favorites) but Novick ranks right alongside him, in my opinion. He depicted New Orleans with accomplished verve and his rendering of *Batman* was at its emotion-filled, awe-inspiring best. Not to mention Dick Giordano, who really brings out the boldness in Irv's pencils

MIKE OSLANCE, Hoffman Estates, Ill.

(We know you've been waiting for the usual sour *note, so here it comes—loud and clear . . .*—Editor)

* * * * *

Dear Editor:

Despite a good plot and good art, "Carnival of the Cursed" was, like most of the new-new look *Batman* stories that preceeded it, only fair. It would have been excellent, if not for the following flaws:

(1) The "campy" death-trap that *Batman* was put in. Can you give me one good reason why Moloch didn't just simply *shoot Batman* on page 14, panel 5, and then toss him in the river to eliminate the evidence, instead of tying him to the sternwheel and leaving the scene of the crime so that anybody might find the body? Can you give me one *bad* reason? Surely such a ridiculously unbelievable situation is beneath Denny O'Neil's writing ability, and your own editorial acceptance.

(2) Now that you've got our hero in this mess, the least you could do is rescue him in a realistic manner, but no, his escape was contrived. Suppose that loose cable hadn't been there? Suppose *Batman* hadn't been able to catch it in his teeth? Suppose he hadn't been able to throw it to the axle? Suppose it hadn't *wrapped* itself *around* the axle? Suppose it hadn't tightened that way, instead of slipping off? *Batman* was pretty darned lucky!

(3) This is not such an obvious, nor as important a defect in the story as the first two, but it was present, nonetheless. There are three sides to *The Batman:* Bruce Wayne, the human being; the awesome night-creature; and the logician-detective. O'Neil shows us a little of the first (*Batman* avenging "Blind Buddy's" murder because he is an old fan was a good, *human* touch), concentrates mainly on the second, but almost totally ignores the third, making *The Batman* seem like a brainless muscle-man who relies solely on brawn and a scare-reputation to catch criminals. I am thinking specifically of the fact that this ingenious super-sleuth never realized that Moloch and Rufus Macob were the same person, although it was obvious to *me* from the beginning.

PAUL DUSHKIND, Fairfax, Cal.

(#1: The death-trap—"campy" or straight—has always been a traditional highlight of Batman *stories. (And who is to psychoanalyze a murderer's motives for the manner he chooses to dispose of his victim?) #2: Yeah,* Batman *was darned lucky, all right. #3: Not every story can—or even should—show the three sides of* Batman. *YOU realized Moloch and Macob were the same because the story was presented on-stage that way to YOU . . . but not to the off-stage BATMAN!*—Editor)

* * * * *

Dear Editor:

To readers of some of your more recent publications, it has been immediately apparent that Bruce Wayne in cape and cowl is a very frightening figure. Tall, lean, and as forbidding as a giant bat, the mysterious gentleman makes sudden, silent appearances and has taken to posturing his gaunt frame quite cinematically—cloaked in inky darkness, long cape swirling, framed by a few appropriately sombre tree-branches and spotlighted by a full moon just over one shoulder. I am not speaking sarcastically—ecstacy would be a closer approximation of my emotions. At long last, MOOD has returned to the *Batman* strip, thanks to the artistry of Irv Novick and Dick Giordano.

The reason these men have succeeded where so many artist-inker teams have failed is largely due to Irv and Dick's appreciation of an important rule that universally applies to the art of all comic mags—that the art must somehow match the mag's main character; there must be some tie-in between the style of art and the main character's physical appearance. Sounds simple, right? Surprisingly, this basic yet vital commodity is lacking in many of today's strips, leaving an empty "moodless" effect and detracting from the unity of the mag as a whole.

In the case of *The Batman*, the key to the strip's mood can be summed up by the words GAUNT and DARK. The *Gaunt Look* is achieved by use of long, sweeping brush-strokes and an emphasis on vertically-oriented lines and panel shapes. Examples are liberally sprinkled throughout #224's "Carnival of the Cursed"—page 2, panel 1; page 8, panels 1-2-3; page 13, panel 2; page 20, panel 1. Dark, dark inks and sharp contrast between colors add to the mood by pointing up the severity of both character and situation, while midnight settings convey the mystery which is so much a part of *The Batman* of today.

To change the subject: I agree with every fibre of my being that the letter-column in *Batman* is in desperate need of a new title. The suggested *Batsignals* seems to fit the bill and the present masthead—quite nicely.

-STEVE BEERY, Alma, Mich.

(Other suggestions for new titles to this lettercol have been: Bring it to The Batman; Calling The Batman; Via Batman; Batman's Batmail; Speaking for Batman; The Bat-Roost; Batmania Mail. *But the overwhelming choice was for* Letters to The Batman. *Indeed, one of our correspondents—Anthony Kowalik, 15641 Union Avenue, Harvey, Illinois, 60426—not only suggested this name but drew a pencil-sketch to go along with it! This sketch has been inked by* Neal Adams *and now adorns this department. Our thanks to Mr. Kowalik . . . and an* original Batman *manuscript is being presented to him as an award!*—Editor)

* * * * * *

Address communications to LETTERS TO THE BATMAN, National Periodical Publications, 909 Third Ave., New York, N.Y., 10022.

EXTRA DAILY PLANET EXTRA

DC TAKES TOP HONORS AT COMIC ART CONVENTION!

July 3, 4, 5, 1970 — At the Comic Art Convention, held annually in New York City, four of DC's own came away with the highest honors.

CARMINE INFANTINO was foremost among those honored by Phil Seuling, chairman and organizer of the Convention. DC's editorial director was presented with a plaque inscribed: "To Carmine Infantino, who exemplifies the spirit of innovation and inventiveness in the field of comic art." Carmine is no stranger to awards. He was once named Best Comic Book Artist by The National Cartoonists' Society, and has won several Alley Awards.

JOE KUBERT, editor of such mags as OUR ARMY AT WAR and TOMAHAWK, also received a plaque. The inscription reads: "To Joe Kubert, for the cinematic story-telling techniques and the exciting and dramatic style he has brought to the field of comic art." Joe has been drawing comics since he was 16, and produces some of the finest work in the field.

DICK GIORDANO was named Best Comic Editor by the fans this year. The Alley Awards are voted on annually by comics fans, and are presented by The Society of Comic Book Fans and Collectors. A top artist, Dick edits AQUAMAN, TEEN TITANS, HOUSE OF SECRETS, WITCHING HOUR, and several other great DC mags.

DOUBLE HONORS FOR NEAL ADAMS!

Honored by the Convention "for the new perspectives and the dynamic vibrance he has brought to the field of comic art," Neal Adams also won an Alley Award as Best Pencil Artist. No wonder! At the age of 21, Neal was the youngest artist ever to have his own strip, and he is now serving as Vice President of the newly formed Academy of Comic Book Art. He's won acclaim from DC fans for his work on Batman, Green Lantern, Deadman and other features.

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The people who take this Art Talent Test are of all ages and occupations. Most of them have little or no previous art training. By professional standards, their drawings may be awkward and amateurish. But the ones who possess the gift of art talent reveal it in many ways. Through simple little exercises, they show the inborn sense of design, the feeling for composition, the ability to observe, and the lively imagination which are such important ingredients of art talent.

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So if you love to sketch or dabble in paints —and have often wondered if you "have what it takes" to become a well-paid commercial artist or sparetime professional painter—why not seize this opportunity to find out? All you need is a pencil and a half-hour of your time. With your special interest, it will be one of the most intriguing and enjoyable half-hours you ever spent.

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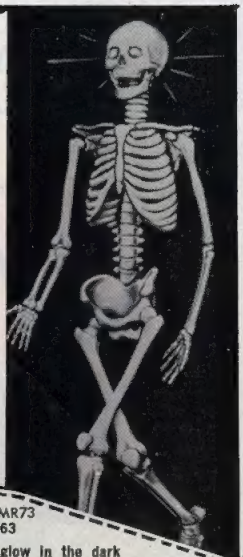

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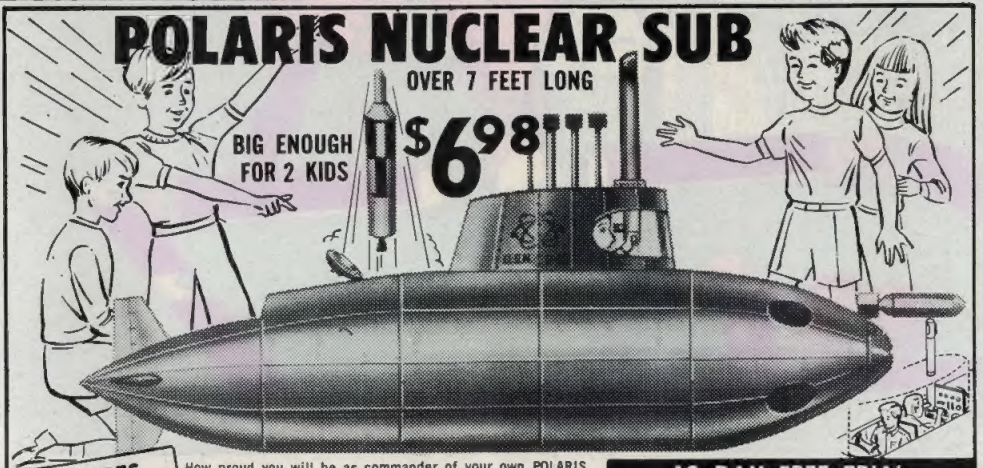

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